

HOUSE BILL 478

By Brooks H

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
Chapter 4, Part 9, relative to postsecondary
financial assistance from net lottery proceeds.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-4-902, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately numbered subdivision:

() "Critical shortage field" means an area of study or an area of specialized expertise designated annually by the commissioner of education as an area in which there exists a shortage of teachers or qualified professionals in Tennessee.

Mathematics, sciences, engineering and foreign languages may be designated as critical shortage fields, but the commissioner of education shall not designate a foreign language as a critical shortage field unless that language is critical to the communications needs of the country.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 4, Part 9, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

§ 49-4-9__.

(a) A student who is eligible for the award of a Tennessee HOPE scholarship and who is majoring in or is enrolled in an approved teacher training program preparing to teach in a critical shortage field shall be eligible for a critical shortage field supplemental award from net lottery proceeds in addition to the HOPE scholarship and any other lottery-funded supplemental award for which the student is eligible.

(b) The critical shortage field supplemental award per academic year for full-time attendance shall be:

(1) Twenty-five percent (25%) of the Tennessee HOPE scholarship award, if the student is a freshman;

(2) Fifty percent (50%) of the Tennessee HOPE scholarship award, if the student has completed at least twenty-four (24) semester hours, but less than forty-eight (48) semester hours;

(3) Seventy-five percent (75%) of the Tennessee HOPE scholarship award, if the student has completed at least forty-eight (48) semester hours, but less than seventy-two (72) semester hours; and

(4) One hundred percent (100%) of the Tennessee HOPE scholarship award, if the student has completed at least seventy-two (72) semester hours.

(c)

(1) A student who is eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship and who changes majors from a field that is ineligible for a critical shortage field supplemental award to a field that is eligible or who enrolls in an approved teacher training program in a critical shortage field shall become eligible to receive the supplemental award in the academic year following such change.

(2) A student receiving a critical shortage field supplemental award who changes such student's major to a nonqualifying major or who withdraws from an approved teacher training program in a critical shortage field shall not be eligible for the supplemental award in any semester following such change. The student shall notify TSAC of the change of the student's major from a critical shortage field to a nonqualifying major or the withdrawal from the approved teacher training program in a critical shortage field within thirty (30) days of the change or before the beginning of classes for the next semester, whichever occurs first. An eligible postsecondary institution shall also notify TSAC of the change of a student's major from a critical shortage field to a nonqualifying major or the withdrawal from the approved teacher training program in a critical shortage field

within thirty (30) days of such change or before the beginning of classes for the next semester, whichever occurs first. Failure of a student to notify TSAC of such change shall render such student ineligible for financial assistance from lottery proceeds.

(3) A student may change majors or preparation to teach from one critical shortage field to another without loss of the critical shortage field supplemental award.

(4) If the commissioner of education determines that an area of study or specialized expertise is no longer a critical shortage field, then any student receiving a critical shortage field supplemental award for that field who continues to major in or prepare to teach in that field may continue to receive the critical shortage field supplemental award as long as the student is eligible to receive the Tennessee HOPE scholarship.

(5) No award under this section shall be made to any student who is ineligible or becomes ineligible to receive a Tennessee HOPE scholarship.

(d) The department of education is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations for the annual determination of critical shortage fields. All such rules and regulations shall be promulgated in accordance with the provisions of Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 5.

(e) THEC is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations for the requirements for majoring in or preparing to teach in a critical shortage field and to otherwise effectuate the purposes of this act. All such rules and regulations shall be promulgated in accordance with the provisions of Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 5.

(f) TSAC is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to establish the application process for critical shortage field supplemental awards and for the method of

paying critical shortage field supplemental awards to part-time students and to otherwise effectuate the purposes of this act. All such rules and regulations shall be promulgated in accordance with the provisions of Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 5.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply to students applying or reapplying for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship for academic year 2007-2008 and academic years thereafter.